

REMARKS

Claims 1-2 and 5-33 have been cancelled without prejudice. Claims 3 and 4 are currently pending and at issue. Claim 3 has been amended to be rewritten in independent form.

Election/Restrictions

The Examiner has indicated that newly submitted claims 18-33 are directed towards an invention independent and distinct from the originally claimed invention, and that since the applicant has received an Office Action on the merits of the originally claimed invention, the originally claimed invention has been constructively elected.

Claim Objections

Claims 10 and 12 have been objected to because of informalities. Since claims 10 and 12 have been canceled, these objections have been obviated.

Obviousness Rejection over Pietsch and Sheiham

Claims 1, 2 and 5-17 have been rejected as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 4,748,146 to Pietsch in view of European Patent Application No. 0 520 639 to Sheiham. Since claims 1, 2 and 5-17 have been canceled, this rejection has been obviated.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated that claims 3 and 4 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the features of the claims from which it depended. Claim 3 has been amended to be rewritten in independent form, and, accordingly, claims 3 and 4 should be allowable.

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,

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